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Opinions of Social Studies Teachers and 7th-Grade Students Regarding Digital Literacy Skills

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Abstract

In today's rapidly evolving technological setting, having digital literacy skills is considered as a requirement to adapt to these developments. It is of great importance that secondary school students, often referred to as digital natives, acquire these skills. Similarly, the educators responsible for instructing them should have a sufficient level of knowledge. In this sense, this study aimed to examine the current state of digital literacy among social studies teachers and 7th-grade secondary school students with the goal of instructing digital literacy skills. In this study, in which the phenomenological method was employed, data was collected using two different interview forms, and was analyzed using content analysis. Both teacher and student participants generally described digital literacy as the ability to access, share, and create information in the digital environment. Since the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the participants reported that they used the Educational Informatics Network (Eğitim Bilişim Ağı) platform and social media for educational purposes. They also expressed a shared belief in practices such as using propoer passwords, antivirus software usage, and not sharing personal or others' information to ensure security in digital environments. In addition, it was found that both teacher and student participants were aware of at least one ethical rule regarding digital literacy. Teacher participants emphasized the need for an expanded curriculum that supports digital literacy in social studies through practical education. They also mentioned that the training they received in digital literacy was insufficient and ineffective.

Keywords: Digital literacy, social studies, teacher, student.

Introduction

In today's rapidly advancing technological scene, where technology is becoming an even more essential part of our lives, it is crucial to keep up with technology and maximize the opportunities it offers. Technological development and change have become an irresistible process in all spheres of life. To adapt to technology, the skills that need to be acquired should also change in line with technological advancements and be flexible enough to accommodate them. Otherwise, technology and its contributions to our lives can lead individuals into challenging and critical situations. The innovations brought about by technology, often referred to today as "digital economy/health/citizenship/media, etc.," not only offer convenience but can also cause serious harm when used without awareness.

Gilster (1997) argues that this century is a century of change and growth in which media and communication technologies are among the fastest-growing areas. This view is supported by the We Are Social (2022) report, which indicates that 67.1% of the world's population, in other words 7.91 billion people, uses mobile communication devices, and 62.5% of them are also internet users. In addition, 58.4% of this population are active social media users. In Türkiye, this rate exceeds global averages. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK, 2022), 94.1% of households in Türkiye have access to the internet, 85% of the total population actively uses the internet, and 82% of individuals use at least one social media platform. The extensive use of technology, especially digital technology connected to the internet, both globally and in Türkiye, demands the development of "literacy" skills in various fields to enable individuals to use information and communication technologies on purpose at all levels.

The 21st century has created an environment where the term "literacy" has gained significantly more meaning than in the past. While literacy traditionally encompassed reading, writing, and arithmetic, it now covers digital literacy. Literacy involves the ability to critically evaluate information in various contexts assisted by computers, convey concepts, and express ideas. A pedagogical perspective, which integrates technical, cognitive, and sociological skills, forms the focal point of literacy

(Kennedy, 2008). This perspective is generally encountered in discussions of literacy in general and, more specifically, in definitions of digital literacy.

Lee (2014) defines digital literacy as the knowledge and skills of using information and communication technologies, and effectively performing a number of complex tasks in digital environments. Ng (2012) explains digital literacy as the ability of individuals to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize digital resources in specific life contexts, enabling constructive social action, as well as creating new information, generating media expressions, communicating with others, and reflecting on this process. Similarly, Martin (2006) describes digital literacy as individuals' capacity to identify, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, analyze, synthesize digital resources, ultimately leading to the creation of new knowledge. Laanpere (2019) emphasizes the employment and entrepreneurial dimensions of digital literacy, defining it as the ability to securely and appropriately access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate, and create information through digital technologies for employment, dignified work, and entrepreneurship.

Kennedy (2008) emphasizes the ability to critically evaluate information in various computer-mediated environments, convey concepts, and express ideas. Similarly, Lanham (1995) underscores the importance of decoding complex images and sounds in the digital world for achieving deep literacy. They both draw attention to the emotional and sociological dimensions of literacy. As a result, digital literacy primarily focuses on literacies rather than media and encompasses finding, using, and disseminating information in the digital world. However, this process also includes a wide range of complex skills in cognitive, motor, sociological, and emotional domains that users need to effectively operate in digital environments (Eshet-Alkali & Amichai-Hamburger, 2004). These definitions are useful in measuring digital competencies and guiding the development of appropriate digital literacy programs (Reddy et al., 2022). Therefore, when preparing educational programs related to digital literacy, it is crucial to comprehensively address the subject from all dimensions and create guiding resources for the program.

In the digital age, the rapid development of digital technologies exposes individuals to situations that require constantly increasing technical, cognitive, and sociological skills to identify and solve problems in digital environments (Eshet-Alkali & Amichai-Hamburger, 2004). In order to address these situations, it is of great importance to maximize digital literacy skills in people of all ages. Developing this skill necessitates considering it as a whole, together with its sub-skills. Eshet-Alkali and Amichai-Hamburger (2004) identified five fundamental skills in this domain: photo-visual skills (interpreting instructions from graphical displays), reproduction skills (using digital replication to create new meaningful materials from existing ones), branching skills (creating abstract representations of mental models, concept maps, and web structures), information skills (evaluating the quality and validity of information), and socio-emotional skills (understanding "rules," assessing data, and designing information through virtual collaboration).

According to the latest framework proposed by the European Union for digital competence areas aimed at citizens, digital literacy is emphasized under five categories: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, security, and problem-solving (Carretero et al., 2017). Lee (2014) classifies digital literacy skills into: operational skills, usage skills, communication and interaction skills, and creation skills. Heitin (2016, as cited in Tinmaz et al., 2022) divides digital literacy into sub-skills such as finding and consuming digital content, content creation, and transmitting

or sharing digital content. Nicholas and Williams (1998, as cited in Bawden, 2001) list sub-skills related to digital literacy as actively engaging in critical thinking about online acquired information, making informed judgments, accurate reading and comprehension in the dense hypertext environment, evaluating information containing facts and opinions, conducting searches in search engines, using information filters, developing personal information strategies for selecting and distributing sources, communicating with others through online networks, generating questions to address information needs, and being cautious in making judgments about the validity and completeness of knowledge through references. Furthermore, several classifications for digital literacy have been proposed by different authors (Bawden, 2008; Gilster, 1997; Hall et al., 2014; Lee, 2014; Ng, 2012; Owen et al., 2016; Reddy, 2022; Rolf, 2021).

The examination of the sub-skills of digital literacy reveals that we are constantly exposed to a multitude of environments where these skills are essential. Actually, there is a continuous need to gather information from digital environments, and this acquired information is shaped and shared through these platforms. In today's world, fields such as work, citizenship, culture, and learning are increasingly becoming more digital. Therefore, being digitally literate is of great importance for accessing opportunities in life, work, and learning (Joint Information Systems Committee [JISC], 2012). Acquiring the appropriate digital skills is crucial not only for learning and workforce readiness but also for developing more open, inclusive, and secure societies (Bandura & Leal, 2022). According to Gilster (1997), the future of both the web and ourselves depends on our capacity to adjust to each other, since the web adjusts to our actions and preferences.

An important aspect of improving digital literacy is its practical value in performing a wide range of tasks, such as accessing health, government, and public service information online, as well as taking advantage of online work, education, and learning opportunities. In this regard, digital literacy is recognized as a social, political, economic, and cultural product. It has significant implications for education, culture, society, and community development in the digital age. This perspective emphasizes the need for individuals to develop their digital literacy and highlights the importance of being digital citizens to participate in the digital society (Junge & Hadjivassiliou, 2010, as cited in Lee, 2014). Digital literacy serves as a logical roadmap for those who fear getting lost in the frightening scope of the internet and the vast amount of information it contains (Chapman, 1999). In an era where an increasing amount of the information is digitally stored, managed, and sold by commercial providers, it is crucial to be cautious not only in evaluating academic studies but also in understanding the sources we work with (Donaldson & Alker, 2019). Digital literacy has become a prerequisite for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Without it, individuals cannot fully participate in society or acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to live in the 21st century. According to Lee (2014), digital literacy, which expands people's online involvement in social, political, urban, and community activities, will become a crucial life skill required for digital participation. Given its obligatory nature today, Eshet-Alkali and Amichai-Hamburger (2004) referred to this skill in the technological age as a "survival skill.".

As societies evolve and technology advances, the learning needs and demands of generations change. Thus, educational curricula must adapt to these changes to reflect new realities. Since the skill of digital literacy is now universally recognized as essential and acquired by everyone, including government leaders, it has begun to play a significant role in formal education. According to Hooft (2006), education is influenced by digital environments through the constant introduction and

integration of new tools, such as digital imaging and video, the internet, wireless technologies, and more recently, personal technologies such as mobile phones and personal computers. When these new tools are appropriately integrated under the right conditions, they have the potential to fundamentally transform teaching and learning. In recognition of this potential, education 4.0 student attributes have been developed, encompassing skills such as cybersecurity knowledge, the ability to generate new knowledge, effective use of appropriate technologies, the ability to discern between true and false information, and the secure distribution of information using various online platforms (Himmetoglu et al., 2020). The acquisition of proper digital skills by individuals is crucial not only for learning and workforce readiness but also for supporting more open, inclusive, and secure societies (Bandura & Leal, 2022).

The ultimate goal of digital literacy education is to enhance individuals' digital literacy in using information and communication technologies, create digital opportunities for participation in society, and in this manner increase their digital inclusiveness (Lee, 2014). While the importance of digital literacy is widely recognized, efforts are being made to define how this skill can be instructed to students. Rotter (2014) divided this educational process into three stages: awareness, interest, and application. To acquire this skill, individuals must first be aware of digital environments and their impact, develop an interest in this field by exploring it, and become effective producers by using a number of applications. According to Ng (2012), theoretically, a digitally literate individual should be able to quickly adapt to emerging technologies and easily choose a new visual/iconic language for communication. The acceleration of this adaptation process depends on the active implementation of the three stages in educational programs.

Students have a wide range of experiences, interests, attitudes, and understandings in terms of digital tools, information systems, and content (Boechler et al., 2014). Therefore, teachers must be aware of students' differences in class, experience, interests, attitudes, and understanding in order to effectively teach the competencies that the curriculum aims to achieve. Teachers who recognize the importance of digital literacy will not only be open to new ways of using this technology but also more willing to share these opportunities with students (Obel-Omia, 2018).

Teachers should be equipped with digital skills throughout their own experiences and educational processes to effectively educate students in this regard. In Türkiye, some of the skills outlined by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), which are expected to be accompanied in all undergraduate programs, directly contribute to the development of digital literacy. These skills include advanced computer software knowledge required by the field, the ability to use information and communication technologies, having theoretical and practical knowledge supported by up-to-date textbooks, application tools, and other resources in the field in order to critically evaluate knowledge and skills acquired in the field, and develope a positive attitude towards lifelong learning (http://tyyc.yok.gov.tr/?pid=33). These competencies are evident in the practical dimension in undergraduate programs. In addition to courses offered in undergraduate program, the Ministry of National Education provides teachers with in-service training on developing digital literacy skills through various training programs and projects (Educational Informatics Network [EBA]), Movement to Increase Opportunities and Improve Technology [FATIH], e-twinning, digital wings projects, etc.).

Teaching digital literacy skills has beceome a worldwide requirement, extending beyond just Türkiye, resulting in finely tuned emphasis on educators responsible for instructing these abilities and

the students who will acquire them. In this study, the social studies course, which places significant emphasis on the importance of digital literacy skills, was selected as the basis. Teachers instructing this course and students taking it were chosen as the participants. There are studies in the literature related to digital literacy skills (Çelik & Kılıçoğlu, 2022; Görmez & Şen, 2021; Kuru, 2019; Ng, 2012; Pala & Başıbüyük, 2020; Silik & Aydın, 2021; Talan & Aktürk, 2021). This study stands out because it evaluates this skill from both student and teacher perspectives simultaneously, which is not commonly observerd in the existing literature. The study aimed to determine the opinions of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students regarding digital literacy and assess their current status in this regard. Indeed, without identifying the current status of teachers' and students' proficiency, it is not possible to determine shortcomings and develop recommendations for instructing this skill. In this sense, the aim of the study wass to examine the views of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students on digital literacy skills. In this context, the study aimed to:

1. Understand how social studies teachers and 7th-grade students define digital literacy.
2. Assess the proficiency of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students in effectively using digital platforms.
3. Examine the approaches of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students to ensuring security while using digital platforms.
4. Investigate the ethical principles that social studies teachers and 7th-grade students consider while using digital platforms.
5. Explore the content created by social studies teachers and 7th-grade students in the digital environment.
6. Determine the opinions of teachers regarding the adequacy of achievements and practices related to digital literacy in social studies classes and gather students' views on the topics they have learned.

Method

Research Model

This study was conducted based on the phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Phenomenological studies aim to explain how individuals or groups experience a phenomenon. In these investigations, the primary aim is to find out the significance of the encountered phenomenon's experience for the individuals engaged in it (Sart, 2017).

In this study, the goal was to comprehensively investigate the proficiency of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students in effectively using digital platforms, their approaches to ensuring security, the ethical principles they consider, the content they create, the adequacy of achievements and practices related to digital literacy in social studies classes, and the detailed opinions of students regarding the topics they have learned. The phenomenological design was adopted because the study aimed to reveal the experiences of teachers and students regarding digital literacy.

The Participants

The study sample was selectec using the convenience sampling method, which is one of the purposive sampling methods. In this method, the researcher picks out an easily accessible situation, which accelerates the research process (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2009). The study group consisted of 13 (10 male and 3 female) Social Studies teachers and 13 (8 male and 5 female) 7th-grade middle school

students in secondary schools in Erzurum during the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. The examination of the social studies curriculum revealed that there were four outcomes related to digital literacy skills in the 5th grade, two outcomes in the 6th grade, and four outcomes in the 7th grade (Ministry of National Education [MoNE], 2018; Yeşiltaş & Gez, 2020). The reason for conducting this study with 7th-grade students in the spring semester was that students should have covered topics related to digital literacy achievements in the 5th and 6th grades and should have also encountered topics related to digital literacy skills in the 7th grade, specifically in the learning areas of "science, technology, society" and "production, distribution, consumption" as defined in the social studies curriculum. Therefore, the selection criterion for students was determined solely based on their grade level. During the study, it was discovered that 5 students had participated in an e-twinning project supported by the Ministry of National Education. Information about the teacher participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Information about the the teacher participants.*

		The faculty/department from which they graduated	Work Experience	Age	The education and projects they participated in within the scope of digital literacy.
1	T1.F.	E F, SSE	10	44	Interactive Classroom Management Course within the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project, Digital Citizenship Training, Computer-Aided Design Course, Fundamentals of Digital Entrepreneurship Course, E-twinning Project
2	T2.F.	E F, SSE	2	27	Interactive Classroom Management Course within the Fatih Project
3	T3.M.	EF, SSE	8	34	-
4	T4.M.	E F, SSE	17	40	Interactive Classroom Management Course within the Fatih Project, Digital Literacy (Information and Internet Literacy) Seminar
5	T5.M.	EF, SSE	8	34	Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
6	T6.M.	EF, Geopraphy E.	28	63	Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
7	T7.M.	EF, SSE	15	38	Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
8	T8.M.	E F, SSE	14	40	EBA Usage, Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project
9	T9.F.	EF, SSE	16	43	nteractive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
10	T10.M.	EF, SSE	9	38	nteractive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
11	T11.M.	E F, SSE	16	41	Fatih Project - Technology and Leadership Forum Course, Technology in Education Course, Information Technologies Guidance Teaching Course, Digital Transformation in Distance Education Course, Interactive Content Development Course with the Factory, Web 2.0 Tools for Developing Digital Teaching Materials Course, Unity Interactive Content and Game Software Basic Level Course, Introduction to Computer Web 2.0 Tools and Content Development with These Tools Course, Seminar on Developing Digital Skills, Seminar on the Use of Web 2.0 Tools in Education, E-Twinning Project
12	T.12.M.	EF, SSE	12	38	Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project, Seminar on Conscious and Safe Use of IT and the Internet within the Fatih Project
13	T13.M.	E F, SSE	2	27	Interactive Classroom Management Course under the Fatih Project

Of the participants, 10 were male, and three were female. They had different age groups and various levels of work experience. Twelve of them had degrees in social studies education, while one graduated from geography education. Besides, three of them actively contributed to the development of digital literacy through their involvement in the e-twinning project.

Data Collection Tool and Data Collection

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews enable the collection of responses through predefined choices and obtaining in-depth information (Büyüköztürk et al., 2019). In the study, two separate semi-structured interview forms were used to conduct interviews with teacher participants and student participants. To develop the interview forms for the study, a review of the literature was conducted (Ng, 2012; MoNE, 2018; Laanpere, 2019; Yeşiltaş & Gez, 2020; Taşçı Ağaoğlu & Durmaz, 2021). As a result, two separate interview forms were prepared (one for teacher participants and one for student participants). The forms consisted of questions related to the dimensions of digital literacy, the outcomes in the social studies curriculum, effective use of digital platforms, security, ethics, and questions related to digital literacy in social studies. While developing the forms, the dimensions included in digital literacy and the outcomes in the social studies curriculum were taken into account. Afterwards, both forms were presented to the opinions of two faculty members who had completed their doctoral degrees in social studies education and one social studies teacher. Both of the faculty members stated that questions related to the effective use of digital platforms and ethical rules should be asked in detail. The social studies teacher also expressed that questions related to the effective use of digital platforms and explanations of ethical rules should be included to match the students' levels. As a result, extra information was added in brackets next to the questions on both interview forms. This extra info was meant to help during the interviews. After adding this information, the final version of the the interview forms were obtained (Appendix 1, Appendix 2).

The forms included 6 questions aimed at determining how social studies teachers and students define digital literacy, their effectiveness in using digital platforms, how they ensure security while using digital platforms, the ethical rules they observe on digital platforms, the content they create in the digital environment, the adequacy of the achievements and applications related to digital literacy in social studies lessons, and the opinions of students about the subjects they have learned. The interviews with teacher participants were conducted online during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the closure of schools. The interviews with students were conducted face-to-face with the necessary pandemic precautions taken, considering that students may not feel comfortable enough in an online environment and might be hesitant to provide detailed answers to the questions directed at them. During the interviews, in cases where a question was not answered in detail by either the teacher or the student participant, follow-up questions were asked or explanations were provided to ensure that the data were collected accurately.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis software, suitable for content analysis. In content analysis, similar data are brought together based on specific concepts and themes and organized in a meaningful way for interpretation. The process involves steps such as data collection, coding, determining categories, determining themes, and visualization through tables (Tekindal, 2021). In this study, audio recordings of interviews were transcribed by the researchers and imported into the qualitative data analysis software. The dataset was examined by one of the researchers to identify

categories. Based on the opinions of the participants, main themes were determined, including digital literacy skills, effective use of digital platforms, ensuring security on digital platforms, ethical considerations when using digital platforms, content created in digital environments, the adequacy of digital literacy achievements and applications in social studies lessons, and students' opinions on the subjects they have learned. These themes and categories were visualized and interpreted in the qualitative data analysis software. During the data analysis, the first researcher identified the main themes based on the questions asked to the participants, and subsequently created categories from the interview data. The second researcher then reanalyzed the interviews based on the themes and categories identified by the first researcher. In cases where there was disagreement between the two researchers regarding themes and categories, discussions were held until a consensus was reached. After achieving consensus on all themes and categories, a break of approximately two months was taken, and the themes and categories were reviewed again. Once the final review was completed, the analysis phase was concluded.

Validity and Reliability

One of the criteria for ensuring the validity of a qualitative study involves providing a thorough report of the gathered data and clarifying the process used to arrive at the conclusions (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2009). In this study, the participants' responses were directly quoted. A method to establish research validity is to present the study's themes or the final version to a subset of participants, giving them the opportunity to verify that their answers have been correctly understood (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). In this study, the created themes were shared with both teacher and student participnats to obtain participant validation. In addition, the data were analyzed by two researchers, and data analysis continued until consensus was reached on themes and categories.

To establish the external reliability, it is essential to describe the qualifications of the individuals participating in the study and explain the social context in which the study was conducted (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2009). In this study, necessary information about the participants was provided, and the environment where the data were collected was explained. Furthermore, the data collection and analysis procedures in the study were described in detail. The raw data of the study were also preserved for potential future needs. To ensure the internal reliability of the study, direct quotations were included in the relevant sections. In research, involving multiple researchers is crucial for tasks such as gathering and analyzing data, as well as for organizing the study's overall structure and framework (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2009). Furthermore, to ensure the study's internal reliability, it is important to explicitly outline the research questions and present the data in a manner consistent with these questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994, as cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2009).

Ethical Permits of Research

In this study, all the rules specified to be followed within the scope of "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were complied with. None of the actions specified under the heading "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics", which is the second part of the directive, have been taken.

Ethics Committee Permission Information:

Name of the committee that made the ethical evaluation = Rectorate of Firat University Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee
Date of ethical review decision= 12.02.2021
Ethics assessment document issue number= 9

Findings

This section of the study presents the findings related to the opinions of the participants regarding digital literacy skills. The opinions are discussed under the headings of digital literacy skills, effective use of digital platforms, ensuring security on digital platforms, ethical rules on digital platforms, content created in the digital environment, and digital literacy in social studies classes. The views of the participants are provided in quotation marks for direct reference.

The Participants' Opinions on the Definition of Digital Literacy Skills

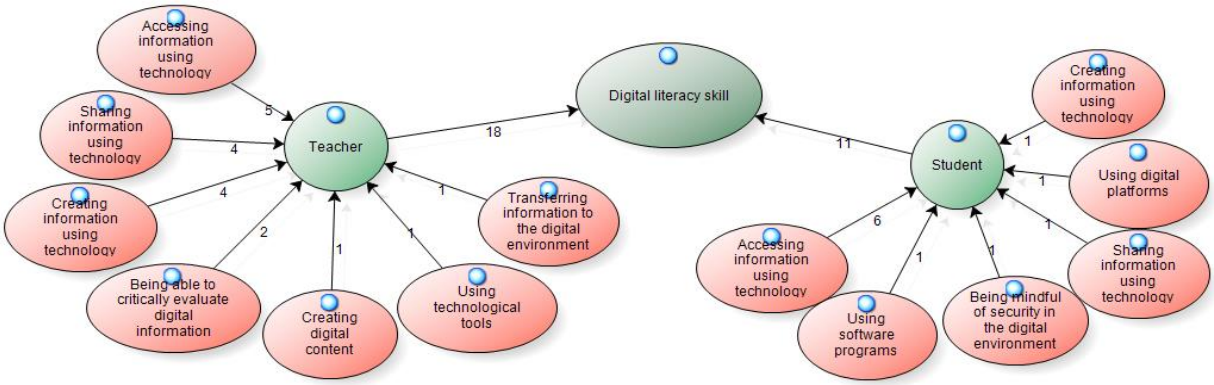

Figure 1. Views of the participants on the definition of digital literacy skills

Figure 1 shows that teacher participants perceived digital literacy as accessing information, sharing knowledge, generating information, critically analyzing digital content, producing digital content, using technological devices, and transferring information to digital media through the use of technology. On the other hand, student participants defined digital literacy as accessing information using technology, using software, being mindful of digital security in the digital environment, sharing knowledge using technology, using digital platforms, and producing information using technology. Both teacher participants and student participants predominantly emphasized accessing information through the use of technology in relation to digital literacy. In addition, they commonly highlighted generating information using technology and sharing knowledge using technology in the context of digital literacy.

T3.M expressed his thoughts by stating, "*Digital literacy refers to the areas of obtaining information related to these, whether it be the internet or computer and tablet options that come to our minds today*." Similarly, T11M, explained as follows: "*Since we are currently in the age of technology, accessing information through smartphones, tablets, and computers is a given*." Among the students, S9.M stated that "*Going to class, researching something on the internet, and watching videos*." Also S13.M. stated that "...*I watch videos on YouTube. I research assignments*." Both teacher and student participants emphasized that the most significant aspect of digital literacy was accessing information through the use of technology.

One of the participants, T3.M. regarded digital literacy as sharing information through the use of technology by stating that "*So, we can say this not only as acquiring but also as sharing, right*?" Similarly, Ö5.E. expressed that "*I define digital literacy as the ability to access and share information using devices like phones, tablets, and computers, in other words, devices that can connect to the internet*." A student participant, S10.M., said that "*It is the skill to produce and share information using technological tools and equipment.*".

The Participants' Opinions on the Effective Use of Digital Platforms

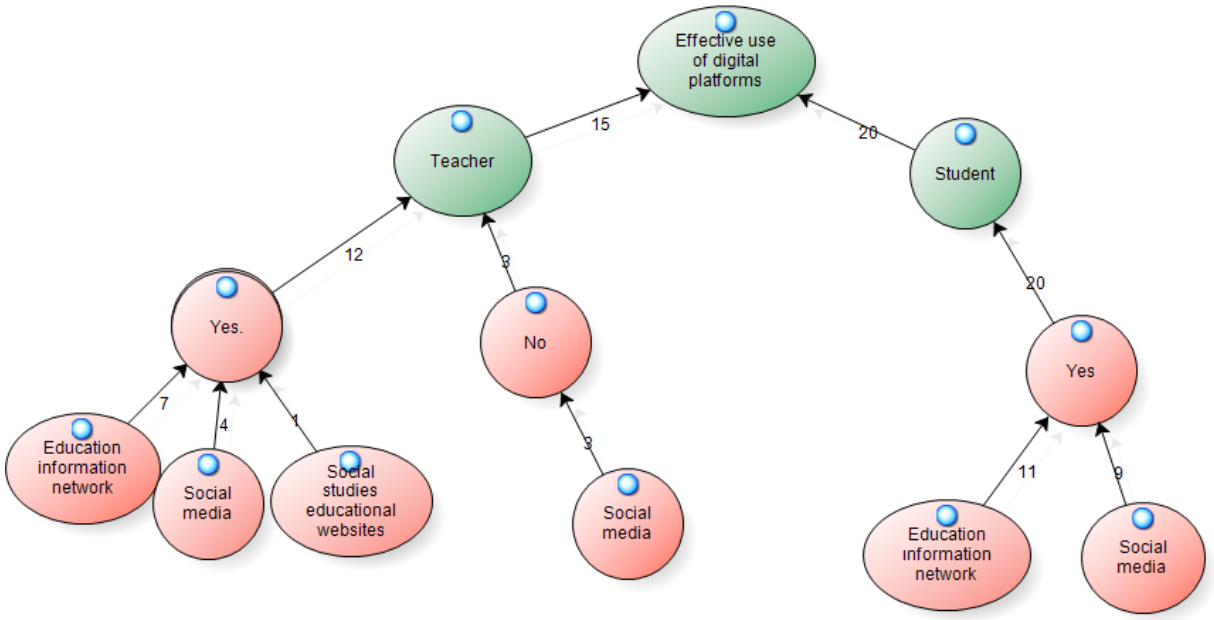

Figure 2. The views of the participants on the effective use of digital platforms

Teacher participants mentioned that they effectively used EBA (Educational Informatics Network), social media, and social studies educational websites. It was also found that student participants actively used EBA and social media. Both teacher and student participants expressed that they used EBA and social media effectively. Some teacher participants who reported that they did not use digital platforms effectively stated that they used social media but not in an efficient manner.

In this sense, T5.M. said that "*I believe I use EBA effectively. I mainly use EBA for instructional materials, solving questions, and sharing content. Since we continuously use it together with students, we also use it as a supplementary resource*." Another participant, T11.M. stated that "*Especially during this pandemic period. We were using it before, but we did not need it as much because we were in school. However, during this period, I use digital platforms more for education. I use EBA, which has excellent content*." Another participant mentioned that "*...Sending assignments to students. I actively use EBA for assessment purposes because it is a web 2.0 tool that allows for interaction. Except for the video lessons on EBA, I use almost all of the question sections. I have stored about a thousand questions in my EBA account. I send online exams, and I receive feedback from students. I use EBA as a means of communication*." On the other hand, one student, S2.K. said that "*I use EBA a lot. For instance, our teacher assigns homework on EBA. I do those assignments, watch videos, and share them with friends. When I need it, I watch the videos uploaded to EBA by myself and take notes in my notebook*." Similarly, S4.F. mentioned that "*There are videos, for example, related to Social Studies. There is a lot of content there. I use them. There are also quizzes*.".

Furthermore, T3.M. stated that he used social media effectively by explainin as follows: "*There are some teacher groups on Facebook. There is a group called 'Visual Information and Archive for Social Studies,' where teacher participants share various images related to lesson content. I occasionally systematize complex topics, summarizing them, and turning them into concept maps. I support them with visuals and share them there*." Similarly, T6.M. mentioned that "*I share some information, videos, and*

memories with friends on social media that are related to myself. I also share more about lesson topics with students for educational purposes..." Among students using social media effectively, S6.F. said that "*I use it more for both lessons and entertainment, to have fun. For example, when I find content that makes me very happy, I share it. It is nice that it is open to everyone*." Also S7.M. stated that "*Yes, I use a few apps. For example, I follow people I like or want to see on social media to see their updates*."

Another teacher participant, T9.F. stated that she used social studies websites effectively, expressing their thoughts as follows: "*In my field, there are websites related to social studies, and I actively use them. I use history website*s..."

On the other hand, a teacher participant, T2.F., mentioned that she did not use digital platforms effectively, saying that "*Let me put it this way: I use them a lot, but I do not think I use them effectively, meaning I could be better at producing something. Right now, I also use social media on digital platforms, but it is mostly for communication purposes.* ".

The Participants' Opinions on Ensuring Security While Using Digital Platforms

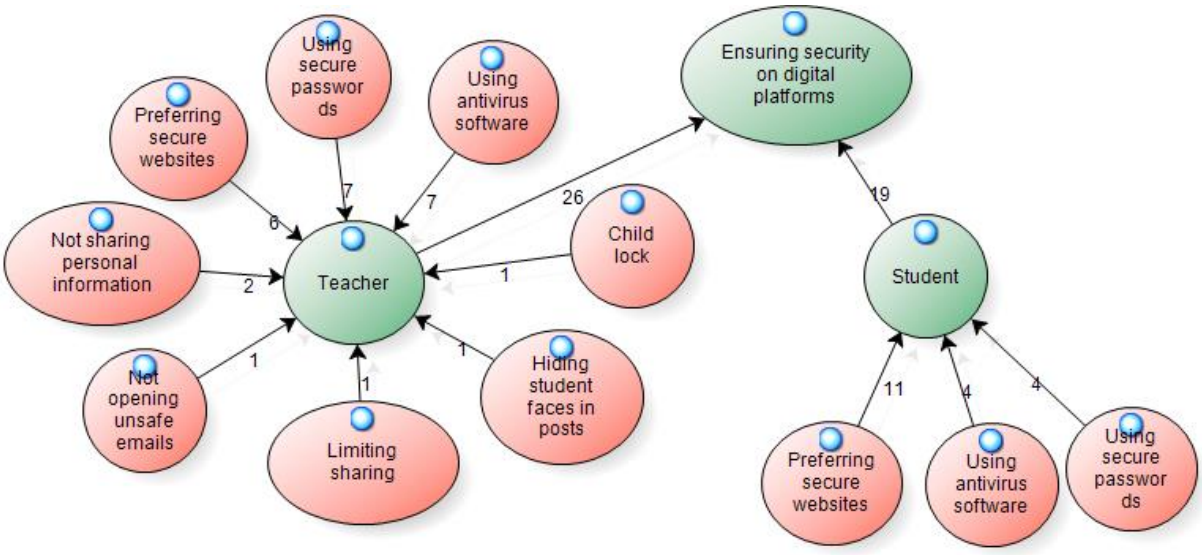

Figure 3. The views of the particpants on ensuring security while using digital platforms

Teacher participants mentioned that they ensured security on digital platforms by using antivirus programs, using secure passwords, preferring secure websites, not sharing personal information, not opening unsafe emails, restricting their sharing, and using child locks to hide student faces. Similar to teacher participants, student particpants mentioned that they preferred secure websites and use antivirus programs.

One teacher participant T4.M. mentioned using antivirus programs for security on digital platforms by saying that "*I always use up-to-date antivirus programs, both on my personal computer and in the classrooms I enter at school, on the smartboard and other devices*." Similarly, T13.M., said that "*...I use antivirus programs. Windows also has its own programs for this*." Among the student participants, S4.F. stated that "*For example, we can use antivirus programs. I also install antivirus programs on my phone. These programs protect us from malicious software. They are helpful*.".

One of the teacher participants, T4.M mentioned preferring secure websites by expressing that: "*We absolutely do not visit unsafe websites. Perhaps you already know that after the last update,*

information technology topics started to be included in our units, and we work on this with the students. We ensure that they do not enter inappropriate websites...". In a similar vein, T5.M. said that "*...we generally use secure websites, official websites. I try to use educational websites or the government's official websites.*" Likewise, S2.F. provided criteria for considering a site as secure by stating that "*First, the extension should be 'http'. This ensures security. After that, I should not write my information anywhere without my family's permission. In other words, I should give my information to secure websites like org sites or government websites. I generally pay attention to these.*" Another student, S7.M. stated that "*I can distinguish secure websites, for example, by looking if it says 'http'. Even if there is a mistake, I can research it myself, and I can see it from there.*"

In temrs of using secure passwords, T8.M. explained their criteria for creating passwords as follows: "*When creating passwords, I use uppercase and lowercase letters. I never enter personal information like dates or my family's or spouse's names. I mainly use numbers, percentage expressions, and symbols. I use different combinations like ' Ae.' My password never starts with my name or surname, and it does not follow a historical process. Sometimes, students have tried my password on the smartboard. They entered my name, surname, and my spouse's name, but it still did not work.*"

In addition, a student participant, S7.M. expressed that "*When creating passwords, I especially avoid using my real name. I mostly use punctuation marks. After that, I frequently use underscores, hyphens, and dots. But I never use my actual name*." Furthermore, T4.E. mentioned ensuring security by not opening unsafe emails as follows: "*Well, I generally never open emails from unknown sources; I just delete them without opening*.".

The Participants' Opinions on the Ethical Rules They Consider While Using Digital Platforms

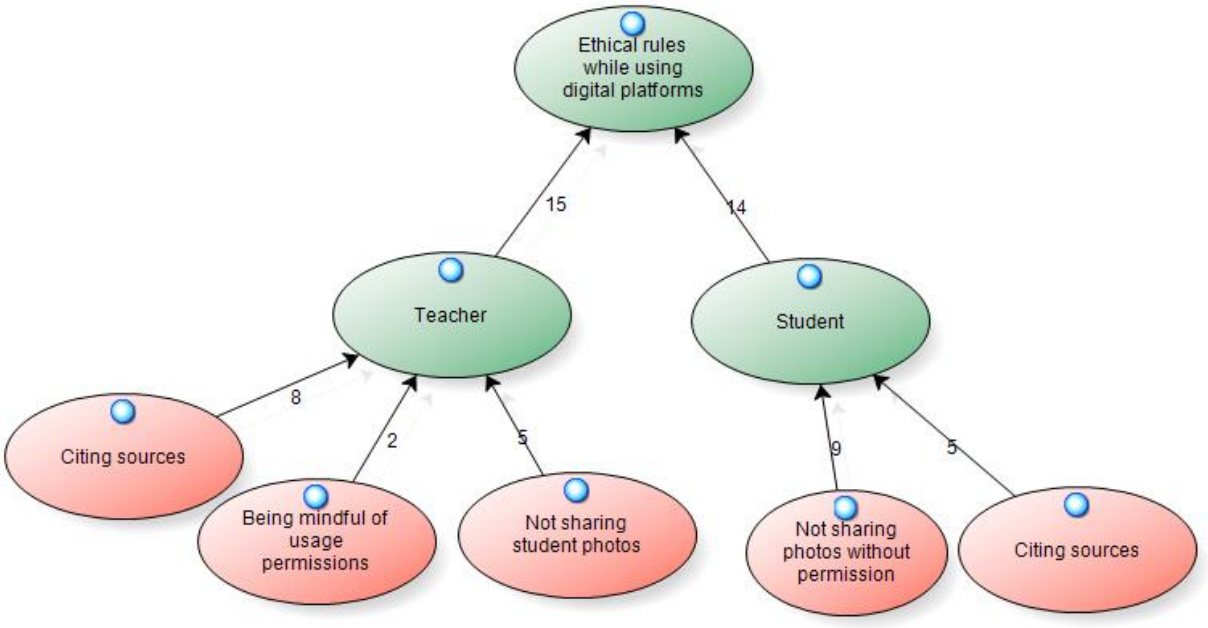

Figure 4. The views of the participants on the ethical rules they observe while using digital platforms

Teacher participants mentioned ethical rules while using digital platforms, such as citing sources, refraining from sharing student photos without permission, and respecting usage rights. Student participants also paid attention to not sharing photos without permission and citing sources

when using digital platforms. It was evident that both teacher and student participants shared a common focus on citing sources.

In this sense, T3.M. highlighted the importance of citing sources as follows: "*Whenever I use someone else's work, I make sure to mention their name or the source I got it from in my notes. For instance, since we often acquire information from sharing platforms, if I see ther is s a special study, I attribute it to the teacher's work if it is there.*" Similarly, T8.M. said that "*I label my writings as my own. Right from the start, I tell the students where I got it from, and I guide them towards the sites.*" Regarding citing sources, one student participant, S1.M. stated that "*Whenever I make a post and if that post belongs to someone else, I include the references for that post.*" Another student, S2.F. stressed the importance of citing sources by stating that "*I present it as the person's knowledge. In other words, I present it by mentioning the name of the person who posted that information on the internet.*".

In terms of not sharing students' photos, T1.F. said that: "*We've seen student photos and sharing of information here and there, and I do not find that appropriate. I have never shared anything involving private matters.*" Another teacher participant, T11.M., emphasized that he obtained parents' information and that no photos were shared on any social media, and faces were concealed. One student, S5. mentioned that "*I mean; I do not immediately share my friends' photos or anything without asking them first. I do not even like sharing my own photos that much.*" Another student, S7.M. stated that "*I share information about myself, but not about my friends. If I want to share something, I always ask first. If they give permission, I share; if not, I do not.*".

The Participants' Opinions on the Content They Create on Digital Platforms

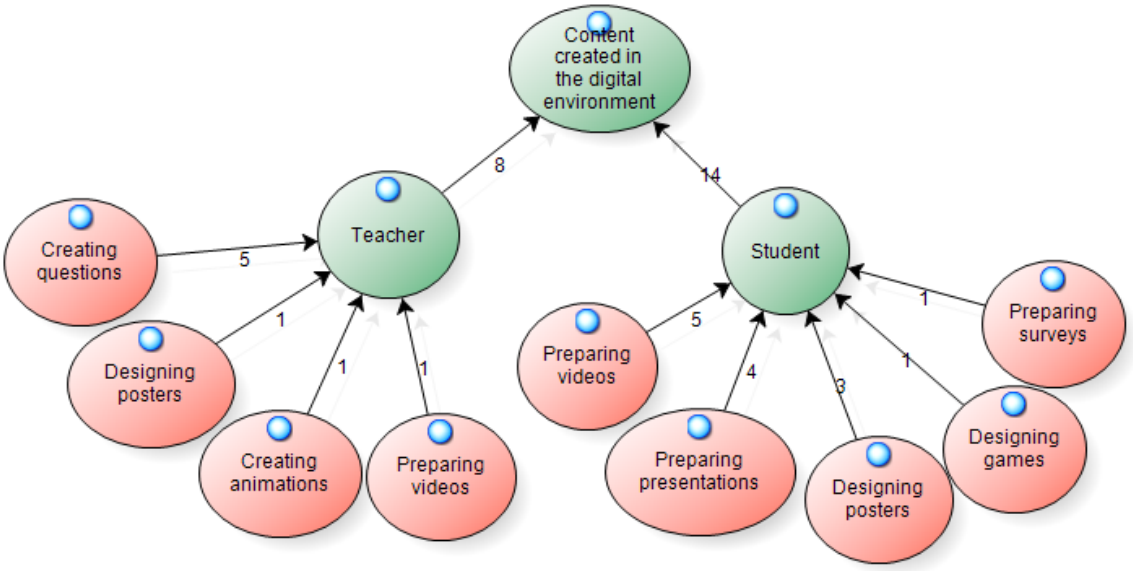

Figure 5. The views of the participants on the content they create on digital platforms

Figure 5 reveals that teacher participants created questions, designed posters, developed animations, prepared videos, created puzzles, and designed games in the digital environment. Students mentioned that they prepared videos, created presentations, designed posters, developed games, and prepared surveys. The participants commonly indicated that they created videos and designed posters in the digital environment.

In this sense, T1.F. mentioned that "*I create questions there for students. I plan tests, create ten to fifteen-question tests, and share them. They stay on your page, and you can share them whenever you want. You can also use other published tests. It is an open platform*." Besides, T3.M, stated that "*I do not create much in terms of games and variety, but when I focus more on exam groups, I always try to prepare a mock exam for them. After accumulating some questions, I am currently developing a question bank. With these, I prepare mock exams, and I apply these exams on both platforms and my own students*.".

In addition, T13.M stated that "I prepared a video related to my class, and we used it in the lesson." One of the students, S4.F, said that "*Yes, I have made a video once. For example, I prepared a video about Türkiye's natural beauties. In that video, I talked about things like where Göbeklitepe is located. I added captions saying 'in this city.' It became a video covering all 81 provinces*." Another student, S7.M. stated that "*I have created a lot of content with my teachers. For example, my teacher used to include photos or videos of some of our projects. I can convert them into videos by recording them on Scratch*.".

Similarly, S1.M, expressed his views on preparing presentations as follows: "*Yes, I have made presentations. Our teacher asked for presentations. I mostly use Microsoft Office programs. I use Atom and Python*." The participants also explained the software programs they use. For example, S12.M stated that "*There is a program called Canva that was very helpful. I used it for my presentations, and it was for the purpose of introducing a city*." Similarly, S11 said that "*I have created other things as well. Posters... They were very helpful for my assignments. For example, when my art teacher gave an assignment, I created it on a digital platform and printed it in color from a color printer. I showed it to the teacher*." Also S12.M added that "*I have prepared posters. I introduced my city again. It was for promotional purposes*.".

Teachers Participants' Opinions on the Adequacy of Digital Literacy Outcomes and Practices in Social Studies Classes, and Student Participants' Opinions on the Subjects They Learned

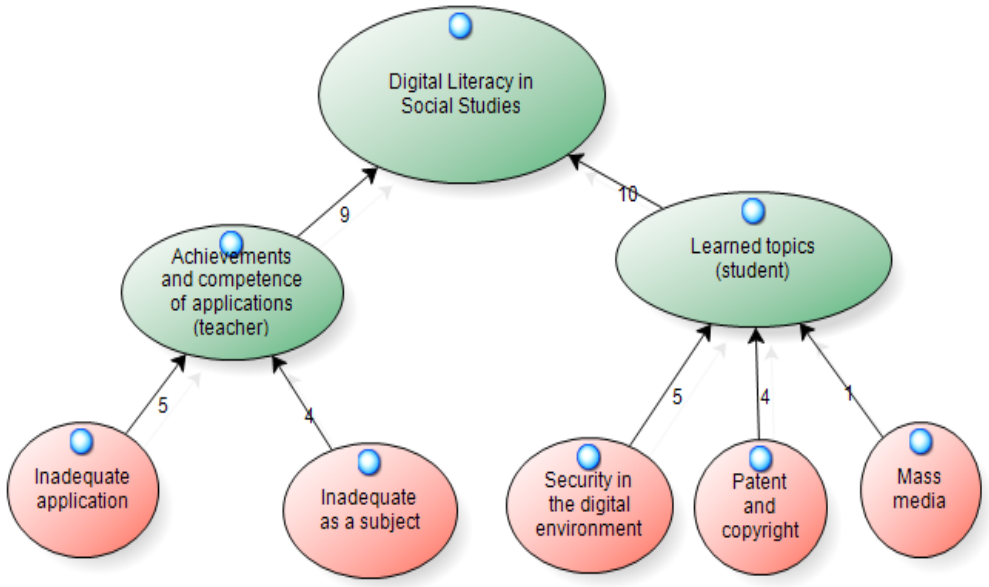

Figure 6. Teachers' views on the adequacy of outcomes and practices related to digital literacy in social studies classes, and students' opinions on the subjects they learned

Teacher participants indicated that the practical dimension of digital literacy in social studies classes was insufficient and lacked in terms of content. Student participants mentioned that digital literacy in social studies covered aspects such as online security, mass media, patents, and copyright.

In this regard, T1.F pointed out the inadequacy of the practical aspect by stating that "*For instance, we covered patent rights in the sixth grade. In social studies, we have a topic called 'science, technology, and society.' Next, there is active citizenship. We touched on e-commerce, emphasizing the importance of websites having the 'https' extension. We talked about what to consider when making purchases online and how to create strong passwords. We explained what it takes to become media literate. However, I believe that it should be taught to students through practical application. We relied more on verbal explanations. It delves somewhat into informatics, but they need to know these aspects. Social studies lesson falls short in this regard... We cannot say that a student who takes this course will become a complete digital literate. It should definitely be complemented with a computer science course*."

Similarly, T4.M. expressed that "*It could be much better if it were taught with practical applications. About 3/4 years ago, police teams came to give a seminar on informatics to students. They had prepared a seminar for the students, which was quite effective. They showed and explained real-life events to the students, and they presented it in a video format. This had a significant impact on the students, as they viewed it as coming from an authority figure. What we teach sometimes seems to be a bit abstract. I believe that it would be more beneficial if practical applications were integrated*.".

Furthermore, T2.F argued that digital literacy was not adequately covered as a subject in social studies as follows: "*It is mentioned as a short part of a unit, and I do not think it is sufficient, to be honest*." Also T5.M. stated that "*Yes, I agree, it should be expanded in terms of content, more time should be allocated, and more topics should be included, especially in the 6th and 7th grades*.".

On the other hand, a student, S1.M. mentioned that the topic of digital security was covered in social studies and said that "*We have learned about security-related aspects. However, because I have been interested in technology since I was young and knew about it from an early age, I would always search for unfamiliar websites on the internet. I used to have a computer, and I would tinker with its settings to understand what they were for. I have developed myself over time, all by myself, without seeking help from anyone*." Another student, S2.F. expressed her thoughts as follows: "*I think it is sufficient. It ensures my security, after all. They teach us how to protect our security there. They teach us how to protect our personal information. In other words, they teach us that we should access secure websites. They also emphasize that we should not share information with people we do not know*." In addition, S3.M. stated that "*We learned about copyright. We learned about patents...*" Finally, S10.M. said that "*We covered copyright, patent rights, mass media, and I cannot remember more*."

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the views of social studies teachers and 7th-grade students on digital literacy skills were examined. These views were categorized under the following topics: digital literacy skills, effective use of digital platforms, ensuring security on digital platforms, ethical rules on digital platforms, digital content creation in the digital environment, and the inclusion of digital literacy topics in the content of social studies lessons.

In the study, the participants emphasized various aspects of digital literacy, including participants' abilities to access, generate, and share information, create content, use technological tools,

operate software, critically evaluate information accessed in digital environments, and consider security elements. This highlights the cognitive and motor skills dimension of digital literacy. Additionally, when participants refer to ethical considerations that should be observed in these environments, it can be considered as the sociological and emotional dimension of digital literacy. This aspect of the study encompasses the skills required to effectively use digital platforms, as emphasized by Eshet-Alkalai and Amichai-Hamburger (2004). Owen et al. (2016) and Bawden (2001) also emphasized the critical thinking dimension of digital literacy. Furthermore, cognitive and motor skills related to digital literacy have been stressed in many studies (Keskin & Küçük, 2021; Lee, 2014; Martin, 2006; Ng, 2012; Reddy, 2022; Rolf, 2021).

The teacher participants expressed that they effectively used EBA, social media, and social studies educational websites. The student participants also indicated that they used EBA and social media effectively. This finding indicates that the EBA, which is made available to students and teachers by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and offers a wide range of content, is used by teachers in various studies and considered beneficial. In their study, Çakmak and Taşkıran (2017) reported that EBA provided students with significant information and was a highly useful platform based on teachers' views, especially for enabling students to review lessons when they cannot come to school. Similarly, Öner (2017) found that teachers used EBA as an effective resource in their instruction. Öner (2017) also indicated that teachers used internet resources and videos/films/documentaries in their lessons. These findings are consistent with the topics mentioned by the teacher participants in this study, which include social studies educational websites (internet resources) and social media (for YouTube/videos, films, and documentaries). However, it should be noted that some criticisms were raised in these studies regarding the insufficiency of the content on EBA and the need for improvements in videos. Considering the studies conducted by Öner (2017), Çakmak and Taşkıran (2017), and Dündar and Yeşilyurt (2019), which raised these criticisms, it becomes evident that the assessment of EBA content was primarily focused on the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the present study was conducted almost one year after the COVID-19 pandemic, during which distance education was implemented, it can be assumed that EBA content was enriched during this period. This aligns with the positive attitudes expressed by the the participants. Indeed, Yerli (2018) investigated the impact of EBA on academic success of students and reported positive results. This can be regarded as a positive outcome that supports students' use of EBA. In a survey conducted by Tekerek and Tekerek (2013), it was found that more than half of the students (a total of 2449 students) used the internet at home primarily for studying. This finding is consistent with the data in the study, indicating that students use social media and internet resources for the purpose of studying.

It was found in the study that the teacher participants took various precautions to ensure security on digital platforms, such as using antivirus software, opting for secure websites, using strong passwords, not sharing personal information, not opening unsafe emails, employing encryption, regularly changing passwords, restricting sharing, not sharing password information, hiding students' faces in shared content, and using parental controls. Similarly, student participants preferred secure websites and used antivirus software. Bawden (2008) regarded technical proficiency in terms of security as a fundamental requirement for using the internet. Arabacı and Polat (2013) and JISC (2012), in their explanations of digital literacy, underscore the importance of possessing the skills to safeguard personal information and ensure individual security and privacy in the face of digital threats. The emphasis placed by the participants on ensuring individual security aligns with the findings of this

study. Özaydın and Kumral (2021) found that 8-10-year-old children were aware of the security problems that may arise when personal information was shared in digital environments. These findings are in line with the results of the present study.

It was also found that the teacher participants adhered to at least one ethical rule when using digital platforms, such as citing sources, not sharing student photos without permission, and obtaining usage consent. Similarly, student participants avoided sharing photos without permission and cite sources when using digital platforms. In this sense, Owen et al. (2016) emphasized the ethical and legal access to information, which supports the finding of the present study. In addition, Bawden (2008) emphasized the importance of adhering to copyright and intellectual property rights as ethical and legal obligations to ensure the appropriate use of information. This suggests that both teachers and students are aware of their ethical responsibilities.

In the study, it was found that teacher participants used digital environments to prepare questions, design posters, create animations, produce videos, prepare puzzles, and design games. In addition, students reported thay they created videos, presentations, posters, games, and surveys. One aspect of digital literacy is producing digital content, and it is important to adhere to security and ethical rules during content creation. Based on the interview results regarding how teachers and students maintain security in digital environments, it is evident that they possessed an awareness of security and ethical principles. JISC (2019) defines digital production as digital creativity, describing it as the capacity to design and/or create new digital works and materials such as digital writing, digital imaging, digital sound and video, digital code, applications and interfaces, web pages, etc. In the present study, the participants expressed that they produced various content using digital devices and platforms. Such a finding suggests that although not all, some of them were active in terms of digital production. It can be said that especially teachers and students participating in e-twinning and FATIH projects organized by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) were both more careful and productive in terms of digital content production. A brief literature review reveals that there are no studies that directly addresses the categories or varieties of digital content creation by educators and students. However, the studies in the literature placed a strong emphasis on the proper use of sources and the ethical control of personal and third-party information throughout the content production process (Arabacı & Polat, 2013; Chase & Laufenberg, 2011; Eshet-Alkalai & Chajut, 2009).

In the study, the teacher participants expressed that the practical dimension of digital literacy in social studies classes was insufficient and inadequate in terms of content. However, students mentioned that they gained knowledge in digital platforms regarding topics such as digital security, mass media, patents, and copyright. The examination of both teacher and student participants' views in accordance with the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum (SBÖP), it can be stated that their opinions are in accordance with the curriculum's objectives. The SBÖP includes an expression that states, "In order to develop students' digital citizenship competencies, in-class and extracurricular activities related to the subject should be included" (MoNE, 2018). This statement aims to have teachers effectively deliver the competencies included in the curriculum regarding digital security, which covers areas such as digital divide, identity theft, personal information privacy, cyber fraud, cyberbullying, and more. In addition, due to the adaptation of official institutions to digital environments in recent times, the importance of social studies lessons in providing "digital citizenship education" is emphasized. The SBÖP (MoNE, 2018) aims to achieve these expectations through the competencies included in the curriculum. The

following competencies, included in various grade levels and different learning areas in the SBÖP (Social Studies Curriculum), aim to directly instruct skills related to digital literacy:

> "discusses the impact of technology use on socialization and societal relationships, questions the accuracy and reliability of information accessed in the virtual environment, emphasizes media literacy, adheres to safety rules when using the digital realm, addresses topics like online shopping, safe internet use, and identity theft, conducts research following scientific ethics, analyzes the changes brought about by digital technologies in the production, distribution, and consumption networks, debates the role of media in social change and interaction, and scrutinizes the influence of popular culture on our culture."(MoNE, 2018)

Especially, the objectives include acquiring information, ensuring security in virtual environments, emphasizing ethical aspects, and aiming to address the social dimension of digital literacy. In addition to these objectives, there are also indirect references to digital literacy in the curriculum. However, when considering the program holistically, although it emphasizes the acquisition of accurate information in digital settings, it lacks specific goals relating to the critical assessment of such information. The objectives seem to provide only superficial knowledge in terms of digital literacy, and it is believed that they may be insufficient for individuals to effectively address the problems they may experience in their social lives. In particular, there is no objective related to digital production/content creation in the social studies curriculum.

In a broader assessment of the study's findings, it is evident that social studies educators possesed an adequate level of digital literacy awareness, in accordance with the Ministry of National Education's standards, in their instructional practices. It is also revealed that 7th-grade secondary school students had a good understanding of digital topics as they were taught in their social studies classes. However, it should be stressed that especially teachers and students who had a keen interest in digital subjects or were actively engaged in various projects linked to this domain (such as e-twinning), exhibited a greater degree of proficiency and awareness in digital literacy.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the digital literacy education and curriculum in Türkiye should be continuously updated in line with the changing conditions since the results of the present study showed that both teachers and students had awareness of digital literacy within the scope of the National Curriculum for Social Studies. Revising the curriculum should have the primary goal of efficiently transfer the updates to the two key stakeholders in education: teachers and students. Furthermore, active participation in projects that enhance digital literacy should be encouraged, as this can contribute to the practical implementation. The results showed that teachers and students who engaged in education and projects aimed at improving digital literacy skills tended to be more proficient in this area.

The success of the information society is emphasized to be dependent on creating conditions in which people trust the services, and this is closely related to high-level digital literacy, network security, data protection, and privacy (Bawden, 2008). Although the study revealed that both teachers and students had awareness of security and ethical rules, new security and ethical issues emerge in digital environments every day. Therefore, it is crucial to provide education in this field that can reach not only teachers and students but also the entire population, in line with the needs of the day.

Ng (2012) found that pre-service teachers can effectively use digital platforms to create significant products with minimal effort. They indicated that these products can be shared with peers in their field, and when they start their teaching careers, they would be competent in creating works that can be used for future teaching activities. Accordingly, it is recommended, particularly in teacher education in general and specifically for pre-service teachers, to implement lessons and projects focusing on effective and level-appropriate digital content production in their fields. Furthermore, it is essential for teachers to receive in-service training, including practical aspects, to develop themselves, as it was revealed in the present study that teachers did not receive any education on this topic during their teacher training. The participants suggested providing practical training to address this deficiency.

The adoption of an interdisciplinary approach that expands the digital literacy skills outlined in SBÖP to be applied in subjects such as technology design across all educational programs is seen as essential for a more effective digital literacy education. The findings of this study, in which teachers indicated that digital literacy achievements and the digital literacy-related subject content in social studies classes were insufficient, and practical application was deficient, further support this recommendation.

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Sosyal Bilgiler Öğretmenlerinin ve 7. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Dijital Okuryazarlık Becerisine İlişkin Görüşleri

Giriş

Teknolojinin büyük bir hızla geliştiği ve yaşamımızdaki yerini daha da artırdığı günümüzde, teknolojiye ayak uydurarak ve onun sağladığı imkânlardan maksimum düzeyde faydalanarak yaşamı sürdürmek önemli bir beceridir. Teknolojik gelişim ve değişimin her alanda gerçekleşmesi önüne geçilemez bir süreç halini almıştır. Bu süreç içerisinde teknolojiye uyum sağlayabilmek için kazanılması gereken beceriler de teknolojik gelişmeye paralel olarak gelişmeli ve ona uyum sağlayacak boyutta değişmelidir. Aksi halde teknoloji ve hayatımıza kattıkları bireyleri zorlu yaşamsal süreçlere sokabilir. Zira teknolojinin hayatımıza kattığı ve günümüzde çoğunlukla "dijital ekonomi/sağlık/vatandaşlık/medya vb." olarak adlandırılan her yenilik sağladığı kolaylıkların yanında bilinçsizce kullanıldıklarında ciddi zararlara sebep olabilmektedir.

Gilster (1997) bu yüzyılın değişim ve büyüme yüzyılı olduğunu ve medya ve iletişim teknolojilerinin bu yüzyılda en hızlı gelişen alanlar arasında yer aldığını ifade etmektedir. Bu görüşü doğrular nitelikteki We are Social (2022) raporuna göre 7.91 milyarlık dünya nüfusunun %67.1'i mobil iletişim aracı kullanmaktadır ve bu kullanıcıların %62.5'i internet kullanıcısıdır. Bu nüfusun %58.4'ü ise aktif sosyal medya kullanıcısıdır. Ülkemizde ise bu oran dünya ortalamalarının üzerinde seyretmektedir. Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK)'nun (2022) verilerine göre Türkiye'de internete erişim imkânı olan hane oranı %94.1, aktif olarak interneti kullanan bireylerin toplam nüfusa oranı %85, en az bir sosyal medya aracını kullanan bireylerin oranı ise %82 olarak belirlenmiştir. İşte teknolojinin ve özellikle de internet bağlantılı olarak gelişen dijital teknolojinin dünyada ve Türkiye'de yoğun olarak kullanımı özellikle bilgi iletişim teknolojilerinin her boyutuyla bilinçli olarak kullanımı için çeşitli alanlarda "okuryazarlık" yetilerinin bireylerde gelişmesini zorunlu kılmaktadır.

21. yüzyıl, "okuryazar olmak" ifadesinin anlamının geçmişte olduğundan çok daha fazla anlam ifade ettiği bir ortam yaratmıştır. Okuryazarlık hala geleneksel okuma, yazma ve aritmetiği kapsamaktadır ancak artık dijital okuryazarlığı da içermektedir. Okuryazarlık artık tümü bilgisayarların aracılık ettiği çeşitli ortamlarda bilgileri eleştirel bir şekilde değerlendirme, kavramları iletme ve fikirleri ifade etme becerisini içermektedir. Okuryazarlığın odak noktasını teknik, bilişsel ve sosyolojik becerileri bütünleştiren daha pedagojik bir görüş oluşturmaktadır (Kennedy, 2008). Bu görüş genel olarak okuryazarlıklar özelde ise dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin yapılan tanımlamalarda da karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Nitekim dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin yapılan tanımlarda da bu becerilere (teknik, bilişsel, sosyal) vurgu yapıldığı görülmektedir.

Türkiye'de ilkokul, ortaokul ve lise düzeylerinde de çeşitli dersler kapsamında yine dijital okuryazarlığı geliştirmeye dönük ders içerikleri mevcuttur. Bütün derslerin öğretim programlarında düzenlenmiş olan temel yeterlikler çerçevesi ise yine dijital yetkinlik başlığıyla eğitim öğretimin her aşamasında ve her alanında dijital okuryazarlığın geliştirilmesini amaçlamaktadır. Ortaokul düzeyinde özellikle sosyal bilgiler ve bilişim teknolojileri dersleri kapsamında bu beceriye yönelik kazanımlar yer almaktadır. Sosyal bilgiler dersi öğretim programında" öğrencilerin dijital vatandaşlık yeterliliklerini geliştirmek amacıyla konuyla ilgili ders içi ve ders dışı etkinliklere yer verilmelidir" ifadesiyle dijital okuryazarlığa atıf yapılmıştır. Ayrıca sosyal bilgiler öğretim programında kazandırılması gereken beceriler arasında direkt olarak dijital okuryazarlık becerisi yer almaktadır. Ayrıca bu beceri ile doğrudan bağlantılı olan medya okuryazarlığı, eleştirel düşünme ve araştırma gibi becerilerin de kazandırılması amaçlanmaktadır. Bu derste bilim, teknoloji ve toplum öğrenme alanında doğrudan bu beceriyi geliştirmeye dönük kazanımlara yer verilmiştir. Ayrıca birey ve toplum, etkin vatandaşlık, üretim, dağıtım, tüketim öğrenme alanlarında da bu becerinin geliştirilmesine yönelik kazanımlar bulunmaktadır (Milli Eğiitm Bakanlığı [MEB], 2018).

Dijital okuryazarlık becerisinin kazandırılmasının yalnızca Türkiye'de değil tüm dünyada bir zorunluluk haline gelmesi dikkatlerin bu beceriyi kazandıracak olan öğretmenlere ve bu beceriyi kazanacak olan öğrencilere yönelmesine neden olmuştur. Bu çalışmada da, içeriğinde dijital okuryazarlık becerisinin önemine büyük vurgu yapılan sosyal bilgiler dersi temel alınarak bu dersi okutan öğretmenler ve bu dersi alan öğrenciler çalışma konusu olarak seçilmiştir. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin ve bu dersi alan 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin görüşleri ve mevcut durumları belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Nitekim öğretmen ve öğrencilerin bu beceriye ilişkin mevcut durumları tespit edilmeden eksiklerin belirlenmesi ve bu becerinin kazandırılmasına yönelik önerilerin geliştirilmesi mümkün olmayacaktır. Bu görüşten hareketle araştırmanın amacı sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin ve 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin dijital okuryazarlık becerisine ilişkin görüşlerinin belirlenmesidir. Bu doğrultuda sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin;

1.Dijital okuryazarlığı nasıl tanımladıkları,
2.Dijital platformları etkin kullanma durumları,
3.Dijital platformları kullanırken güvenliği sağlama şekilleri,
4.Dijital platformlarda dikkat ettikleri etik kurallar,
4.Dijital ortamda oluşturdukları içerikler,
5.Sosyal bilgiler dersinde dijital okuryazarlık konularına ilişkin görüşleri ortaya çıkarılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Yöntem

Bu araştırma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan olgubilim (fenomenoloji) desenine uygun olarak yürütülmüştür. Olgubilim kişi ya da kişilerin bir olguyu nasıl deneyimlediklerini açıklayan çalışmalardır. Bu çalışmalarda kişi ya da kişilerin bu olguya ait deneyiminin anlamı belirlenmeye çalışılır (Sart, 2017).

Araştırmanın çalışma grubu amaçsal örnekleme yöntemlerinden biri olan kolay ulaşılabilir durum örneklemesi ile belirlenmiştir. Bu yöntemde araştırmacı erişilmesi kolay bir durumu seçtiği için araştırmaya hız kazandırır (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Çalışma grubunu 2020-2021 eğitim öğretim yılı bahar döneminde Erzurum ilindeki ortaokullarda görev yapan 13 (10 erkek-3 kadın) Sosyal Bilgiler öğretmeni ve 13 (8 erkek-5 kız) ortaokul 7. sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır.

Araştırma verileri yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme hem sabit olarak belirlenmiş seçeneklere bağlı olarak cevaplar almayı hem de derinlemesine bilgiler elde etmeyi sağlar (Büyüköztürk vd., 2019). Araştırmada sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrencilerle görüşme yapmak amacıyla 2 ayrı yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmıştır.

Araştırma verileri nitel veri analizi programı kullanılarak içerik analizine uygun olarak analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analizinde benzer veriler, belirli kavram ve temalar göz önüne alınarak bir araya getirilir ve anlamlı bir şekilde düzenlenerek yorumlanır. Bu çalışmada sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmelere ilişkin ses kayıtları yazılı hale getirilerek nitel veri analizi programına aktarılmıştır. Veri seti incelenerek kodlar belirlemiştir. Kodlar sınıflandırılarak kategoriler oluşturulmuş, kategoriler dikkate alınarak temalara ulaşılmıştır. Bulgular nitel veri analizi programında oluşturulan şekillerle görselleştirilmiştir ve yorumlanmıştır. Bu araştırmada katılımcıların görüşlerine doğrudan alıntılar şeklinde yer verilmiştir. Araştırmalarda geçerliği sağlamanın bir yolu da katılımcıların verdikleri yanıtların doğru yorumlandığını kontrol etmeleri için temaların ya da çalışmanın son halinin katılımcılardan bir kısmıyla paylaşılarak katılımcı teyidi alınmasıdır (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). Bu araştırmada oluşturulan temalar 2 sosyal bilgiler öğretmeni ve 2 öğrenci ile paylaşılarak katılımcı teyidi alınmıştır.

Bulgular

Araştırma bulgularına göre Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin dijital okuryazarlığı teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiye ulaşma, bilgiyi paylaşma, bilgiyi üretme, dijital ortamda bilgiye eleştirel bakabilme, dijital içerik üretme, teknolojik aletleri kullanabilme, bilgileri dijital ortama aktarma olarak gördükleri belirlenmiştir. Öğrenciler dijital okuryazarlığı teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiye ulaşma, program kullanabilme, dijital ortamda güvenliğe dikkat, teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiyi paylaşma, dijital platformları kullanabilme, teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiyi üretme olarak ifade etmişlerdir. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrenciler en fazla teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiye ulaşmaya ilişkin görüş belirtmişlerdir. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrenciler dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin olarak, teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiyi üretme, teknolojiyi kullanarak bilgiyi paylaşmayı ortak olarak vurgulamışlardır.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri EBA, sosyal medya ve sosyal bilgiler eğitim sitelerini etkin olarak kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğrenciler etkin olarak EBA ve sosyal medyayı kullanmaktadırlar. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrencileri EBA ve sosyal medyayı ortak olarak etkin şekilde kullandıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Dijital platformları etkin olarak kullanmadıklarını belirten sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri sosyal medyayı kullandıklarını fakat etkin olmadıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri dijital platformlarda güvenliği sağlamak için anti virüs programı kullandıklarını, güvenli siteleri tercih ettiklerini, güvenli şifre kullandıklarını, özel bilgileri paylaşmadıklarını, güvenli olmayan mailleri açmadıklarını, özel şifreleme yaptıklarını, sık şifre değiştirdiklerini, paylaşımları kısıtladıklarını, şifre bilgilerini paylaşmadıklarını, paylaşımlarda öğrenci yüzlerini gizlediklerini çocuk kilidi kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğrenciler de sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ile benzer olarak güvenli siteleri tercih ettiklerini, antivirüs programı kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin dijital platformları kullanırken dikkat ettikleri etik kurallar kaynak belirtme, öğrenci fotoğrafı paylaşmama ve kullanım iznine dikkattir. Öğrenciler dijital platformları kullanırken fotoğrafları izinsiz paylaşmamaya ve kaynak belirtmeye dikkat etmektedirler. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrencilerinin ortak olarak kaynak belirtmeye dikkat ettikleri görülmektedir.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin dijital ortamda soru hazırladıkları, afiş tasarladıkları, animasyon tasarladıkları, video hazırladıkları, bulmaca hazırladıkları, oyun tasarladıkları görülmektedir. Bunun yanında içerik üretmeyen öğretmenler de bulunmaktadır. Öğrenciler video, sunum hazırladıklarını afiş tasarladıklarını, oyun tasarladıklarını, anket hazırladıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ve öğrenciler ortak olarak dijital ortamda video hazırladıklarını, afiş tasarladıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri sosyal bilgiler dersinde dijital okuryazarlığın uygulama boyutunun yetersiz kaldığını, konu olarak yetersiz olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Öğrenciler sosyal bilgiler dersinde dijital okuryazarlığın dijital ortamda güvenlik, kitle iletişim araçları, patent ve telif hakları gibi boyutlarda ele alındığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Bu araştırmada sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin ve 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin dijital okuryazarlık becerisine ilişkin görüşleri incelenmiştir. Bu görüşler dijital okuryazarlık becerisi, dijital platformların etkin kullanımı, dijital platformlarda güvenliği sağlama, dijital platformlarda etik kurallar, dijital ortamda oluşturulan içerikler, sosyal bilgiler dersinin içeriğinde dijital okuryazarlık başlıkları altında ele alınmıştır.

Çalışmada öğretmen ve öğrencilerin bilgiye ulaşma, bilgiyi üretme ve paylaşma, içerik üretme, teknolojik aletleri kullanma, program kullanma becerileri dijital okuryazarlığın bilişsel ve motor beceriler boyutuna vurgu yaparken, öğretmenlerin dijital ortamda ulaşılan bilgiye eleştirel bakabilme becerisine, öğrencilerin ise bu ortamlarda güvenlik unsurlarına dikkat edilmesi hususuna vurgu yapmaları dijital okuryazarlığın sosyolojik ve duyuşsal boyutuna atıf olarak değerlendirilebilir. Owen vd., (2016) ve Bawden (2001) da dijital okuryazarlığın eleştirel düşünme boyutuna vurgu yapan kişilerdir. Ayrıca öğretmen ve öğrencilerin dijital okuryazarlık becerilerin ilişkin bilişsel ve motor becerileri birçok çalışmada vurgu yapıldığı görülmektedir (Keskin & Küçük, 2021; Lee, 2014; Martin, 2006; Ng, 2012; Reddy, 2022; Rolf, 2021).

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri EBA, sosyal medya ve sosyal bilgiler eğitim sitelerini etkin olarak kullanmaktadırlar. Öğrenciler ise etkin olarak EBA ve sosyal medyayı kullandıklarını belirlenmiştir. MEB tarafından öğrenci ve öğretmenlerin kullanımına sunulan ve oldukça geniş bir içeriğe sahip olan EBA dijital platformunun yapılan diğer çalışmalarda da öğretmenler tarafından kullanıldığı ve faydalı

bulunduğu sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır. Çakmak ve Taşkıran (2017) yaptıkları çalışmada EBA'nın öğrencilere önemli derecede katkı sağlayacak bilgilere yer verildiğini aynı zamanda öğrencilerin okula gelemediklerinde ilgili dersin tekrarını yapabilecek imkânlar sunmasından dolayı son derece faydalı bir platform olduğunu öğretmen görüşlerine dayanarak vurgulamaktadırlar. Öner (2017) de benzer şekilde öğretmenlerin EBA'yı derslerinin öğretiminde etkili bir kaynak olarak kullandıkları sonucuna ulaşmıştır.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri dijital platformlarda güvenliği sağlamak için anti virüs programı kullanma, güvenli siteleri tercih etme, güvenli şifre kullanma, özel bilgileri paylaşmama, güvenli olmayan mailleri açmama, özel şifreleme, sık şifre değişimi, paylaşımları kısıtlama, şifre bilgilerini paylaşmama, paylaşımlarda öğrenci yüzlerini gizleme, çocuk kilidi kullanma gibi önlemler almaktadırlar. Öğrenciler de sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri ile benzer olarak güvenli siteleri tercih ederek, antivirüs programı kullanmaktadırlar. Bawden (2008) güvenlik konusunda internet ortamında teknik açıdan yeterli olmayı, internet kullanımında ön koşul olarak görmektedir. Arabacı ve Polat (2013) ve JISC (2012) dijital okuryazarlığı açıklarken kişisel bilgileri gizli tutarak bireysel güvenlik ve mahremiyeti korumaya yönelik olarak sahip olunan bilgilerin ve dijital ortamlarda tehdit edildiğinin farkına vararak bu durumla nasıl başa çıkacağını bilmenin önemli bir dijital okuryazarlık becerisi olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Çalışma sonucunda da öğretmen ve öğrencilerin bireysel güvenliği sağlamanın önemine vurgu yapmaları bu çalışma ile uyumlu görünmektedir.

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri dijital platformları kullanırken kaynak belirtme, öğrenci fotoğrafı paylaşmama ve kullanım izni gibi etik kurallara dikkat etmektedirler. Öğrenciler dijital platformları kullanırken fotoğrafları izinsiz paylaşmamakta ve kaynak belirtmektedirler. Owen vd., (2016) bilgiye etik ve yasal olarak erişme konusuna vurgu yaparak çalışmada öğretmen ve öğrencilerin kullanım izni ve kaynak belirtme şeklinde ifade ettikleri etik kullanıma paralel bir görüş belirtmiştir. Bawden'ın (2008) telif haklarına ve fikri mülkiyete saygı şeklindeki etik ve yasal hususlar, bilgilerin uygun şekilde kullanılmasını sağlamak için gereklidir ifadeleri öğretmen ve öğrencilerin etik konulara ilişkin sorumluluklarının farkında olduklarını göstermektedir.

Çalışmada sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin dijital ortamda soru hazırladıkları, afiş tasarladıkları, animasyon tasarladıkları, video hazırladıkları, bulmaca hazırladıkları, oyun tasarladıkları belirlenmiştir. Bunun yanında bazı öğretmenler içerik üretmediklerini hazır içerikleri kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğrencilerin video, sunum, afiş tasarladıkları, oyun tasarladıkları, anket hazırladıkları görülmektedir. Dijital okuryazarlığın bir boyutu da dijital içerik üretmedir. Bu içerik üretimi sırasında da güvenlik ve etik kurallara riayet edilmesi önemlidir. Çalışma sonunda öğretmen ve öğrencilerin güvenlik ve etik kuralların farkında olduklarını söylemek mümkündür. JISC (2019) dijital üretimi dijital yaratıcılık adıyla açıklamış ve bu beceriyi dijital yazı, dijital görüntüleme, dijital ses ve video, dijital kod, uygulamalar ve arayüzler, web sayfaları gibi yeni dijital eserler ve materyaller tasarlama ve/veya yaratma kapasitesi olarak tanımlamıştır. Çalışma kapsamında öğretmen ve öğrencilerin dijital aygıt ve platformları kullanarak çeşitli içerikler ürettiklerini ifade etmeleri dijital üretim konusunda hepsinin olmasa da bir kısmının aktif olduğu yorumu yapılabilir. Özellikle MEB tarafından düzenlenen e-twinning, FATİH projelerine katılan öğretmen ve öğrencilerin dijital içerik üretimi konusunda hem daha dikkatli hem de daha üretken oldukları söylenebilir. Yapılan alan yazın taramasında öğretmen ve öğrencilerin dijital içerik üretim türlerine ilişkin bir çalışmaya rastlanmamıştır. Ancak üretim aşamasında doğru kaynak

kullanımı, kişisel ve başkalarına ait bilgilerin kullanımı gibi unsurlara vurgu yapıldığı görülmüştür (Arabacı & Polat, 2013; Chase & Laufenberg, 2011; Eshet-Alkalai & Chajut, 2009).

Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenleri sosyal bilgiler dersinde dijital okuryazarlığın uygulama boyutunun yetersiz kaldığını, konu olarak yetersiz olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Öğrenciler ise sosyal bilgiler dersinde dijital ortamda güvenlik, kitle iletişim araçları, patent ve telif hakları gibi konularda bilgi edindiklerini söylemişledir. Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin bu görüşleri 2018 SBÖP'e göre incelendiğinde görüşler doğru olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Öyle ki SBÖP'te "öğrencilerin *dijital vatandaşlık yeterliliklerini geliştirmek amacıyla konuyla ilgili ders içi ve ders dışı etkinliklere yer verilmelidir*" şeklinde bir ifade yer almaktadır (MEB, 2018). Bu ifade son zamanlarda dijital bölünmüşlük, kimlik hırsızlığı, kişisel bilginin gizliliği, siber dolandırıcılık, siber zorbalık vb. alanları kapsayacak şekilde dijital güvenlik konularında ders kapsamında öğretmenlerin içerikte yer alan kazanımları etkili şekilde vermesini hedeflemektedir. Ayrıca günümüzde resmi ortamların da dijital ortamlara uyum sağlaması nedeniyle "dijital vatandaşlık" eğitimi konusunda da sosyal bilgiler dersinin önemine vurgu yapılmıştır. SBÖP (MEB, 2018) bu beklentilerini içerikte yer alan kazanımlarla gerçekleştirmeyi hedeflemektedir.

Çalışmanın sonuçları genel olarak değerlendirildiğinde sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin derslerinde öğrencilere kazandırılması istenilen ölçüde dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin bilgiye sahip oldukları görülmüştür. Ortaokul 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin ise sosyal bilgiler dersinde verildiği ölçüde dijital konularda bilgi sahibi olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Ancak özellikle dijital konulara ilgili olan veya bu konuda gerçekleştirilen çeşitli projelerde görev alan öğrencilerin dijital okuryazarlık konusunda daha bilinçli oldukları fark edilmiştir.

Öneriler

Türkiye'de dijital okuryazarlığa ilişkin yapılan eğitimlerin ve belirlenen öğretim programlarının günün koşullarına göre sürekli güncellenmesi önerilmektedir. Bu güncellemelerin eğitim-öğretimin temel iki paydaşı olan öğretmen ve öğrencilere etkili şekilde sunulması ve özellikle dijital okuryazarlığı geliştirecek nitelikte projelere katılımları sağlanarak konunun uygulama boyutunda da aktif olarak görev almalarının sağlanması önerilmektedir.

Dijital ortamlarda özellikle mahremiyet ve güvenlik konularına ilişkin gerekli tedbirlerin alınması ve bu konuda yalnızca örgün eğitim kurumlarında bulunan öğretmen ve öğrencilere değil bütün vatandaşlara ulaşabilecek nitelikte eğitimlerin verilmesi bir gereklilik olarak görülmektedir.

Bu çalışmadan yola çıkarak özellikle öğretmen eğitiminde genel olarak dijital okuryazarlık özelde ise öğretmen adaylarının kendi branşlarında etkili ve seviyeye uygun dijital içerik üretimi konusunda ders ve projelerin uygulanması önerilmektedir. Ayrıca öğretmenlerin bu alanda kendilerini geliştirebilmeleri için uygulama boyutunu da kapsayan hizmet içi eğitimleri almaları, bu becerinin en doğru şekilde verilebilmesi açısından önem taşımaktadır.

SBÖP'te yer alan diijital okuryazarlıkla ilgili becerilerin genişletilerek teknoloji tasarım gibi derslerde uygulanabilmesine ilişkin disiplinler arası bir yaklaşımın bütün öğretim programlarında benimsenmesi, daha etkili bir dijital okuryazarlık eğitimi için elzem olarak görülmektedir.

Medya okuryazarlığı dersi ile sosyal bilgiler dersi içeriklerinin birbirini tamamlar nitelikte tasarlanması ve bütün öğrencilere ortaokul seviyesinde verilmesi önemsenmektedir.

Appendix 1: Teacher Interview Questions

1. How would you define digital literacy?
2. Do you consider yourself proficient (knowing and using the capabilities they offer) in using digital platforms effectively? If so, how?
3. How do you ensure security when using digital platforms?
4. Do you pay attention to ethical rules on digital platforms (regarding content creation, sharing, transactions, usage, rights of other users, quoting from content, copyright, personal and corporate privacy, violations, etc.)? If yes, how?
5. Have you created any content in the digital environment? Could you provide some information about it?
6. Do you believe that the teaching of digital literacy skills is effective in the context of social studies lessons (in terms of achieving learning outcomes and practical applications)?

Appendix 2: Student Interview Questions

1. How would you define digital literacy?
2. Do you consider yourself proficient (knowing and using the capabilities they offer) in using digital platforms effectively?
3. How do you ensure security when using digital platforms?
4. Do you pay attention to ethical rules on digital platforms (regarding content creation, sharing, transactions, usage, rights of other users, quoting from content, copyright, violations, etc.)? If yes, how?
5. Have you created any content in the digital environment? Could you provide some information about it?
6. In your social studies class, what have you learned about digital literacy, and what practical applications have you engaged in?